

Appropriations Committee
Public Hearing – February 21, 2017
H.B. No. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Todd Czuprinski, Executive Director
Boys & Girls Club of New Britain, Inc.

I am Todd Czuprinski and I am the Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of New Britain. Our Boys & Girls Club is a member of the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs along with sixteen other Boys & Girls Clubs who combine to serve over 50,000 youth during out of school time all year long. The Boys & Girls Club of New Britain serves 1,752 young people in New Britain and surrounding towns and have been doing so for the past 125 years. On behalf of the Boys & Girls Club of New Britain's members and their families, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my opposition to H.B. No. 7027 An Act Concerning The STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

I am testifying in opposition to the proposed reduction and consolidation of Neighborhood Youth Center funding into a pool of funds (Student Support Services) designed to serve far too divergent population groups and needs.

Connecticut Clubs serve nearly 57,000 youth each year and provide programs that help kids do better in school, strengthen families, teach kids life skills, and build strong communities.

Parents who know their kids are in a safe and enriching afterschool environment are more likely to increase their earning power. Connecticut benefits from an investment in Boys & Girls Clubs as we save on societal costs such as healthcare, public assistance, and incarceration.

In a study of more than 6,600 Boys & Girls Club members in Connecticut, we found that our members were 60% less likely to be chronically absent from school when compared to students across the state.

On a local level, the Boys & Girls Club of New Britain serves approximately 300 members on an average day. 86% of our members come from low income households.

We are open six days per week, year round and we offer a safe, nurturing youth service organization serving boys and girls ages 6-18. We focus on programs offering academic success, healthy lifestyles and good character & citizenship.

Of these program areas, Neighborhood Youth Center funding provides support for Power Hour (Academic Success) Keystone Club (Good Character & Citizenship) and SMART Moves (Healthy Lifestyles.)

Neighborhood Youth Center funding is critical to the Boys & Girls Club of New Britain so that we may be able to continue to provide the level of service and quality of programming for our members.

I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to testify and urge you to maintain the Neighborhood Youth Center funding through the Department of Education.